TRUTH THE STRENGTH OF FREEDOM.

A

DISCOURSE

ON

THE DUTY OF A PATRIOT,

WITH

SOME ALLUSIONS TO THE LIFE AND DEATH

OF

ANDREW JACKSON.

PRONOUNCED JULY 6, 1845.

BY

GEORGE W. BETHUNE,

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Philadelphia, July 8th, 1845.

Rev. Geo. W. Bethune,

Dear Sir,—Having heard with much pleasure, on Sabbath morning the 6th inst. your able and most appropriate Sermon, we unite in soliciting from you a copy of it for publication, and sincerely hope you will comply with our request.

Very truly, your friends,

ROBERT ALLEN,
GEO. W. MORRIS,
GEO. H. MARTIN,
WM. WHITNEY,
WM. G. MENTZ,
JOHN STRUTHERS,
JAMES PETERS,
MICH. REED,
FRED'K. GAUL,
JOHN L. LUDLOW.

Philadelphia, July 9th, 1845.

Gentlemen,

The discourse, which you ask for the press, having been written in haste, and other circumstances very unfavourable to its proper preparation, will not, I am sure, on perusal, justify the opinion which your kind partiality has formed of it; but I send it to you at once, as my fear of criticism is far less than my desire to honour any request you may make of

Your friend and servant,

GEO. W. BETHUNE.

Messrs. R. Allen, J. Struthers,
G. H. Martin,
James Peters, and other gentlemen.

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DISCOURSE.

PSALM LXXVIII. 5, 6, 7.

"For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children; that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their children, that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments."

Among our many national sins, there is none more likely to provoke divine chastisement, yet less considered or repented of, even by Christians, than ingratitude for political blessings. That there are evils among us, no one will deny; that changes might be made for the better, it were unreasonable to doubt; and, concerning methods of removing evil or working good, we may differ widely yet honestly. Evil is inseparable from human nature, the best human schemes are capable of improvement, and human opinions must be various, because they are fallible. It is a nar-

row, unthankful spirit, which, brooding over imperfections, or sighing after greater advantages, or bitterly condemning all who think not the same way, refuses to perceive and acknowledge the vast benefits we actually enjoy. Never was there a revolution at once so just and so successful as that which won our country's independence; never, except in the Bible, have the rights of man been so clearly and truly defined as in our constitution; never did greater success attend a social experiment than has followed ours. Since the establishment of our confederacy, tumults, insurrections, and violent changes, have been busy in all the civilized world besides. Throne after throne has fallen, and dynasties have been built up on the bloody ruins of dynasties. In some nations, the people have wrung, by force, partial concessions from hereditary rule; in others, after convulsive, misdirected efforts, they have been crushed again by the iron hoof of despotism; nor is the voice of a prophet needed to foretell a long, desperate struggle of uprising humanity with the powers of political darkness; while the bloody discords and constant confusion of other republics on the same continent with

ourselves, demonstrate the incompatibility of freedom with ignorance and superstition. Ours is now, with the exception of the Russian and British (if, indeed, the passage of the Reform Bill was not an organic change), older than any monarchical government in christendom. The increase of our population from less than three millions to twenty, in seventy years, multiplies many times any former example; yet, notwithstanding the enormous migration to us from various countries, where free principles are unknown, our wide land has more than enough room for all: growth in numbers has been a chief cause of our growth in wealth, and our laws, strong as they are liberal, have proved themselves sufficient to compose, maintain and rule all in concord, prosperity and power. You will search in vain for another example of a vast nation governed, without troops or armed police, by their own will. It is not five years since, that our people, spread out over an immense territory, after a contest in which the utmost enthusiasm excited both parties, changed their rulers. Yet not a bayonet was fixed, nor a cannon pointed, nor a barricade raised, to guard the place of suffrage. The ballot, falling noise-

lessly as snow upon the rock, achieved the result. Within the last twelvemonth, the stupendous process has been repeated as peaceably and safely. Each of the great political sects, which divide the popular vote, has triumphed and been beaten. Much there has been to censure in the harsh recrimination and unfraternal bigotry on either side; but when the decision was reached, though the long-rolling swells which succeed the storm did not at once subside, and here and there some violent partisan may have betrayed his vexation, the surface became calm, and the noise soon died away. Every true patriot, submissive to the oracle of the polls, whether wisdom or error, said in his heart, God bless the people!

Our difficulties, real or supposed, have arisen out of our advantages, for good and evil are mixed with all human affairs. The freedom of those institutions, under which we live, has its price, which must be paid, so long as man is prone to abuse, by impatience and excess, those favours of Almighty God, which yield happiness only when they are used moderately and religiously. Elated by prosperity, we have forced

our growth too fast. We have attempted, by plausible inventions, to transcend the laws of trade and production. We have complicated the machinery of our interests, until our clear, simple constitution has become, in the hands of sophisticating politicians, a riddle of mysteries. The limits of habitation have been enlarged beyond the blessings of church and school-house. Vices and faults, peculiar to new settlements, have reached the heart of our legislation. To carry on our far-grasping schemes, we have strained our credit till it broke. Freedom of speech and of the press, has been abused to licentiousness by prejudice, rashness, and selfish ambition. Acknowledging as we do the rights of conscience in their broadest meaning, even the holy name of religion has been dragged upon the arena of party.

Our republic is not a paradise; our countrymen, like ourselves, are not angels, but frail, erring men. Our history has been an experiment. Mistakes have been made and will be made. It is thus that we are to learn. Shall we, in coward scepticism, overlook our immense advantages to hang our fears upon a few faults, or prognosti-

cate the failure of a system which has accomplished so much, because it shares with others the imperfections of humanity? Is there a sober-minded man among us, who would be willing to encounter the oppressions of what are called strong governments, that he might escape from under our present system? Our faults are our own, and our misfortunes are consequences of our faults; but our political advantages are God's rich gifts, which it becomes us thankfully to receive and piously to improve. All our evils have their legitimate remedies, and there is no danger which may not be avoided by a wise care. Instead, therefore, of querulous fears and ungrateful discontent, the Christian patriot should zealously inquire what he can do to secure and advance the best welfare of our beloved land. Our holy text is full of instruction to this end.

The Psalmist is describing the policy of God with Israel, the people whom he wished to know no king but himself, and, therefore, the only safe policy for any people, who would preserve their liberties from the encroachments of despotic rule.

"He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children; that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children, that they might set their hopes in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments."

We see here,

First: The character of a safe and happy people.

"They set their hopes in God; they forget not the works of God; they keep his commandments."

Secondly: The means which God has appointed for cultivating this character.

"He established a law in Jacob, and appointed a testimony in Israel."

THIRDLY: THE OBLIGATION UPON A CHRISTIAN PATRIOT ARISING FROM THIS PROVIDENCE OF JEHOVAH.

"He commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children; that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children."

FIRST: THE CHARACTER OF A SAFE AND HAPPY PEOPLE.

They "set their hopes in God." The man who looks to God as the source of his welfare, is lifted above temptation within and without. Conscious of a holy, heart-searching eye upon him, his virtue will not be an outward semblance, cloaking from human sight, secret crime, or selfish purposes. The opinions, fashions, or rewards of the world, will neither shape his principles nor modify his practice. He will fear to do evil, lest he should offend against God. He will do justice and love mercy, because he walks humbly with God.

His expectations of eternity will guard and sustain him in honesty. He knows himself to be immortal and God eternal; that vice, which no human scrutiny can detect and no human laws punish, will meet with a terrible vengeance, while good acts and good purposes will be rewarded openly by Him, who seeth in secret, at the judgment day. The pains of virtue and the pleasures of vice, being alike transitory, are of little account in his estimation, who sets his hope in God, his Saviour, and his Judge. He relies upon God, because He is merciful, and knows that he is safe, because God is Almighty.

Were our nation composed of such believers, how untroubled would be our peace! how entire our mutual confidence! how free our affairs from intrigue, corruption, and wrong! The key would never be turned in the lock, the gibbet seen no more, and the prison doors stand open. No man would fear, but every man would love his neighbour, and the true interests of all be acknowledged by each as his own.

They "forget not the works of God." When

God is the treasury of a man's hopes, he loves to trace the workings of God's wisdom and power, that he may know the sources upon which he can draw. He considers creation, and in its minuteness as well as its vastness, he reads certain proof of the same Power, which made, ruling so perfectly, that nothing is overlooked, and so absolutely, that nothing is beyond his presiding will. He considers redemption, that God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son as the deliverer of all who believe upon his name, and that all power is in the hands of our Elder Brother, the incarnate God. Therefore is he sure, that God rules in mercy as well as justice, that he will listen to the prayer of his people, and that, however mysterious his methods, all things are working together by the Holy Spirit for the universal triumph of truth, and righteousness, and peace.

With such convictions, how cheering to him must be the study of Providence! With what confidence, remembering the faithfulness of God in the past, will he confide in him amidst the difficulties of the present, and for the develop-

ments of the future! and how steadfastly reject for himself and for his country, any policy which crosses the unchangeable laws of God, the ever-living Lord!

How strong would this nation be in hope and virtue, did our people thus remember the works of God! for never, since the world began, has the providence of God been more remarkable, kind, and instructive, than towards us. Jehovah did not lead Israel forth from Egypt to the inheritance of Canaan with a more mighty hand or manifest care, than has been seen in our history since the first prayer of the pilgrim from the tyranny of the old world to this better country, rose through its virgin forests, until our present day of unexampled prosperity.

They "keep his commandments." The believer's obedience to the directions of God is the necessary result of such trust and study. Gratitude will make him loyal to a sovereign so kind and faithful: a sense of his own weakness and short-sightedness will incline him to follow landmarks so certain, and the approbation of an

honest conscience reward and incite him to persevere.

"Happy is the people that are in such a case! Yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord!"

SECONDLY: THE MEANS WHICH GOD HAS APPOINTED FOR CULTIVATING SUCH A CHARACTER.

"He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel:" or, as an admirable critic translates it, "He established an oracle in Jacob, and deposited a revelation with Israel."

The Psalmist, doubtless, here refers not only to the law given on the Mount, in which God defined human duties and prescribed religious worship, but to all the communications which he had made or might yet make to man.

The value of the word of God is seen in the fact, that it is the word of God. What almighty mercy and wisdom saw fit to reveal, must be of the last importance. We are sure of nothing, but

that which God has made known. Never could we have discovered his will concerning us, or known how to walk in safety, had he not said, "This is the way." Never could we have been assured of a Providence over us, or looked within the tremendous realities of eternity, had not he manifested himself by his own declarations, and brought immortality to light by Jesus Christ, the Man whom he has ordained as Saviour and Judge. Without the word of God, we should be without God, ignorant, hopeless, lost in perplexity, the sport of conjecture, of passion, appetite, and dread. Truth would have no definition, oaths no confirmation, laws no sanction, and the grave no promise; the past would teach us nothing but our ruin, and the future would be black with despair. When we have that word, how glorious is the reverse to the pious believer! We stand by the side of God when he laid the foundation of the earth, and we look beyond the catastrophe of created things to the fixed results of justice and love. We trace back our lineage to a brotherhood with every human soul; and we learn the will of our common Father concerning the relations which bind us to him and his family on

earth. We see the path of righteousness marked for our feet, and One walking by our side "whose form is like to that of the Son of God," sustaining our weakness and assuring our faithful obedience of eternal reward, after the shadows and the labours of time shall have passed away and ceased forever. Nay, in the rest of the Sabbath, the worship of the sanctuary, the communion of saints, and the witnessing sacraments, we have the foretaste, sign and confirmation of an eternal rest, love and satisfaction in the house of God, eternal and undefiled.

Need I ask you to consider the blessedness, here and hereafter, of a nation who know and obey that word, and who cultivate and delight in that worship! Where is the suicidal, traitor hand, that would dare pluck this corner-stone from the foundation of our hopes, and, extinguishing the light which heaven has kindled, give our country back to the gloom, the licentiousness and cruelties of those nations which have forgotten God!

THIRDLY: THE OBLIGATIONS UPON THE CHRIS-

TIAN PATRIOT ARISING FROM THIS PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

"He commanded our fathers to make them known to their children; that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them unto their children."

The first duty laid upon us is, to study and practise the word of God ourselves. It is by the light of Christian example, that the saving power of the Gospel is made manifest to the world. The believer of the word of God, therefore, owes a profession and practice of Christianity not only to God, to himself, and the church, but to his country, because its welfare can be secured only by religion.

Then, it is our duty, to the utmost of our means, to give the advantage of the same religion to those who neglect, or cannot, of themselves, obtain the means of grace, especially in the new settlements of that immense valley, the power of which already overbalances the older States.

Wherever a fellow citizen is without the knowledge of God, there is an element of danger mingling with the aggregate of the national will. We can never control crime, nor refute error, but by truth; and in withholding the truth of God, we consent to all the mischief that may be done by those, to whom we might teach the right, but do not.

But, especially, are we to strive that the Bible should be in the hands, and, by the blessing of God upon our labours, in the hearts of the rising generation. Upon their shoulders the burthens of society, our country, and the cause of God, are soon to rest. From them their children are to learn good or evil. Neglect a child, and you have neglected the man, the woman, the father, the mother, generations yet unborn. The truth of God in our hands belongs to them, as much as to ourselves. It is deposited with us for their benefit. By omitting to give it, we rob them of God's best gift, and our land, in future years, of its best defence and glory. The means of education, so far as the arts of reading and writing go, are not enough. Educate with all your energies.

Do nothing that may by any possibility interfere with, and every thing to increase such instruction; but let us ever be ready to set the Bible before the opened eye and the craving mind. Better that a child should learn to read without the Bible, than to know not how to read the Bible. Thank God! Christians need not contend for debateable ground in this matter. With our Bible and Tract, and Sunday School Societies, if we be only faithful in supporting them, we are more than a match, by God's help, for all the infidelity and superstition among us. We lose time and waste our strength, by petty squabblings with evil on its own dunghill. Let us rather devote all our power and zeal to those ready and open methods of disseminating truth, which no force in this land can forbid us to use. When the true church of God consecrates the talents she has from Him, to the spread of the Gospel through our country, every wall, that the enmity or idolatry of men can build against it, shall fall like those of Jericho at the trumpeting of the Levites; when she walks forth, the light of her presence shall dissipate every shadow, and "terrible as an army with banners,"

her peaceful triumphs will crown our whole people with the glory of the Lord, a joy and a defence.

Blessed be God, there are those who have felt the necessity of these religious efforts for the good of our country, and the immortal well-being of our countrymen. They are, indeed, but too few, and their zeal has not always been equal to their opportunities and responsibility. Yet in them, their examples of Christian conduct, their testimony to the power of religion, and their benevolent labours for the illumination of the ignorant, we see the providence of God blessing our nation with moral life, and confirming our government, founded upon the will of the people, by the only sufficient buttresses, knowledge, virtue, and the fear of God. The faithful Christian is the only faithful patriot, and he is not a faithful Christian who serves not his country in the name of Christ, and in the spirit of his Gospel.

These thoughts, as you know, have been suggested by the recent anniversary of our national independence, a day which should be dear and sacred to us all, though often miserably polluted

by intemperance, and profaned by party assemblages. Surely, we might devote one day of the year to the charities of patriotic brotherhood, and lose all minor distinctions in our common citizenship; nor should we forget before the altar of our fathers' God, the Author of all mercies, his mighty doings for us in the past; the good, the great, the wise, the valiant, whom he has raised up to serve, guide, and defend us; and the blessing which he has caused to rest upon their counsels, their arms, their zeal, and their sacrifices. Such recollections are due to Him, to our country, and to humanity. Children should hear the story, and the best genius contribute to its illustration. Fresh laurels should be plucked and wreathed upon the graves of the beloved for their country's sake, and eloquence pay its richest tribute to their heaven-sent worth, that the living may hear and follow their example.

While I thus speak, the spell of a great name comes upon our hearts, compelling us to utter their thoughts and emotions. When the sun of that morning rose, it gilded the fresh tomb of one whose ear, for the first time since the 4th of July,

1776, failed to vibrate with the thunderings of his country's birth-day joy; and a voice, for the first time, answered not its cheers, which, since its boyish shout was heard through the revolutionary strife, had never been wanting in the annual conclamation. The iron will, whose upright strength never quivered amidst the lightning storms that crashed around it in battle or controversy; the adamantine judgment, against which adverse opinions dashed themselves to break into scattered foam; the far-reaching faith, that flashed light upon dangers hidden from the prudence of all beside; the earnest affection, that yearned in a child's simplicity, the purpose of a sage, a parent's tenderness, and the humble fidelity of a sworn servant, over the people who gave it rule and elevation, have ceased from among us: Andrew Jackson is with God. He, who confessed no authority on earth but the welfare of his country and his own convictions of right; who never turned to rest while a duty remained to be done, and who never asked the support of any human arm in his hour of utmost difficulty; bowed his head meekly to the command of the Highest, and walked calmly down into the grave, leaning upon

the strength of Jesus; paused on the threshold of immortality to forgive his enemies, to pray for our liberties, to bless his weeping household, and to leave the testimony of his trust in the Gospel of the Crucified; and then, at the fall of a Sabbath evening, passed into the rest which is eternal. His last enemy to be destroyed was death. Thanks be to God, who gave him the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!

To say that he had faults, is to say that he was human; the errors of a mind so energetic, in a career so eventful, must have been striking; nor could a character be subjected to censure more merciless, than he provoked by a policy original and unhesitating, at open war with long established usages, and dogmas that had grown into unquestioned axioms. Bereft in his early youth of parental guidance and restraint, educated in the camp and the forest bivouac, and forced to push his own fortunes through the rough trials of a border life, we can scarcely wonder that, until age had schooled his spirit and tempered his blood, he was impetuous, sensitive to insult, and prone to use the strong hand.

Warm in his attachments, he was slow to discover frailty in those he loved, or to accord confidence where once he had doubted. Grasping, by his untutored genius, conclusions which other men reach by philosophical detail, he made, while sure of just ends, some mistakes in his methods, for the time disastrous. Called to act at a crisis, when the good and evil in our national growth had become vigorous enough for conflict, and wealth and labour, like the twins of Rebecca, were struggling for the right of the elder born, his decisions in great but sudden emergencies, were denounced by that after criticism, which can look back to condemn, but is blind to lead. Compelled to resolve stupendous, unprecedented questions of government and political economy, he roused the hostility of opposite schools in those difficult sciences. Never shrinking from any responsibility, personal or official, he sternly fulfilled his interpretations of duty as a coördinate branch of the national legislature, leaving his course to the verdict of his constituents; nor did he hesitate to avail himself of all the means he could extract from the letter of the constitution, to achieve, what he thought was, the intent of its spirit. His was a stern,

prompt, and energetic surgery, and, though the body politic writhed under the operation, none can tell, though some may conjecture, the more fatal consequences his severity averted. If he were wrong, public opinion has since adopted the chief of his heresies, and there is no hand strong enough or daring enough to lay one stone upon another of that, which he threw down into ruins. But in all this, his heart was with the people, his faith firm in the sufficiency of free principles, and regardless alike of deprecating friends and denouncing opponents, he held on throughout to one only purpose, the permanent good of the whole, unchecked by particular privileges, and unfettered by artificial restrictions. To use his own lofty language, "In vain did he bear upon his person enduring memorials of that contest in which American liberty was purchased; . . . in vain did he since peril property, fame and life, in defence of the rights and privileges so dearly bought, if any doubts can be entertained of the purity of his purposes and motives. . . . Nor could he have found an inducement to commence a career of ambition, when gray hairs and a decaying frame, instead of inviting to toil and battle, called him to

contemplate other worlds, where conquerors cease to be honoured, and usurpers expiate their crimes."

But, though there are passages in his life, about which the most honest have held, and may yet hold, contrary opinions, there are services of his demanding the gratitude of all, and virtues all must delight to honour. Can we forget that victory, in which his ready strategy and consummate skill turned back, by the valour of scarcely disciplined men, the superior numbers and veteran determination of a foreign foe from the spoil and dishonour of a rich and populous territory? or the entire success, with which he delivered from the scalping-knife and torture of wily and ferocious savages, the Florida settlements, an achievement, which in subsequent trials far less arduous, no other leader has been able to imitate? Or the triumph of simple firmness over diplomatic, procrastinating subtleties, when, planting his foot upon what was clearly right, in a determination to suffer nothing that was clearly wrong, he swung round a mighty European empire to pay its long withheld indemnity for injuries done to American commerce? And in that darkest hour of our country's history, when a narrow sectional-

ism counterfeited the colour of patriotic zeal, and discord shook her Gorgon locks, and men shuddered as they saw, yawning wide in the midst of our confederacy, a gulf, which threatened to demand the devotion of many a life before it would close again, how sublimely did he proclaim over the land that doctrine sacred as the name of Washington, *The Union must be preserved!* and the storm died away with impotent mutterings. Nor is his glory in this the less, that he shared it with another, and that other, one whose name the applauses of his countrymen have taught the mountains and the valleys to echo down for far generations, as the gallant, the frank, the brilliant statesman, to whose fame the highest office could add no decoration, nor disdisappointment rob of just claims to the people's love. It was a lofty spectacle, full of rebuke to party jealousy and of instruction to their countrymen, when Henry Clay offered the compromise of his darling theory, and Andrew Jackson endorsed the new bond that made the Union again, and, as we trust, indissolubly, firm.

Remarkable as the contrast is, there were traits in the temper of the indomitable old man, tender,

simple, and touching. With what faithful affection he honoured her while living, whose dear dust made the hope of his last resting-place more sweet, that he might sleep again at her side! And, if his heart seemed sometimes steeled against the weakness of mercy, when crime was to be punished, or mutiny controlled, or danger annihilated; he could also stoop in his career of bloody conquest, to take a wailing, new-made orphan to his pitying heart; with the same hand, that had just struck down invading foes, he steadied the judgment-seat shaken with the tremors of him who sat upon it, to pronounce sentence against him for law violated in martial necessity; and at the height of authority, the poor man found him a brother and a friend.

But, O how surpassingly beautiful was his closing scene, when, as the glories of his earthly honour were fading in the brightness of his eternal anticipations, and his head humbly rested upon the bosom of Him who was crucified for our sins, his latest breath departed in the praises of that religion which had become his only boast, and in earnest counsel that all who loved him might obtain the like faith, and meet him in heaven! There was

no doubt in his death; he had prepared to meet his God; and when his giant heart fainted, and his iron frame failed, God was the strength of his heart, and his portion forever. Little would all his achievements have won for him, had he gained the whole world yet lost his soul; but now his fame will survive until time shall be no more, and his spirit is immortal among the redeemed. The angels bore him from us, no longer the hero, the statesman, the guide of millions, and the master mind of his country; but a sinner saved by grace to the feet of the Lamb that was slain, a little child of God to the bosom of his Father. My hearers, have you been his friends? Obey his parting counsel, and by faith in Jesus, follow him to heaven, whom you have delighted to follow on earth. Have you been in opposition to his life? Refuse not the profit of his death, but find in that blood, which cleansed him from all his sins, atonement for your own. O that his last testimony had the same power over men's souls, as his cheer in battle, and his proclamations of political doctrine! Then would he shine bright among the brightest in the constellation of those, who turn many to righteousness.

My brethren, I have spoken much longer than I meant to have done, but you would not have withheld from me the privilege. If I have dwelt upon the best traits in the notable character of one, who has not been suffered to escape the earnest crimination of many, it has been because he is dead. You, who listened to me with so much candour, when I paid, four years since, a humble tribute to the merits of him who reached the height of authority to sink into a grave watered by a nation's tears, will not condemn my utterance of similar emotions now. The jackal hate, that howls over the lifeless body, is far removed from your Christian charity and generous judgment.

> Vile is the vengeance on the ashes cold,
> And envy base to bark at sleeping mould.

Let us rather pray as Christians, that the memory of good deeds may live, and the example of a Christian's death be sanctified. Let us, as Christian patriots, take new courage in setting forth, by word and practice, the paramount virtue of the religion we profess, to save our country, as it saves the soul; and, while we mourn the conflicts of evil

passion, not forget the actual good, which, by the Divine favour, is working out health from the mysterious fermentation.

There is, notwithstanding occasional agitation, a calm, good sense among our people, sufficient to recover and maintain the equilibrium. It is not seen blustering around the polls; it is not heard vociferating and applauding in party meetings; nor, unhappily, does it often appear on the arena, where misnomered statesmen struggle rather for personal advancement than their country's good; but it lives with those, who, in honest toil, are too independent to be bought, or, in honest competence, too content to desire the doubtful distinctions of popular favour. It is nurtured by the lessons of holy religion. It is breathed in the prayer of God's true worshippers. It deliberates around the domestic hearth, where the father thinks of the posterity who are to live after him; in the philosophic retirement of the man of letters; in the workshop where the freeman feels proud of his sweat; and in the cultured field, from which the farmer knows that his bread is sure by the bounty of heaven. It is felt in the practice of

common duties, the example of daily virtues, and the results of observant experience. It is like oil on the waves of noisy strife. The man in power trembles as he hears its still small voice; the secret conspirator finds its clear eye upon him, and quails beneath the searching scrutiny; and, like the angel of Israel, it meets the demagogue on his way to curse the land which God has blessed, and, if he be not turned back, it alarms and forewarns the beast on which he rides.

It may be said, that the party of the honest and intelligent is small, far smaller than, with my respect for my country, I believe it to be; but, if it be, it has still the controlling voice from the divisions of the rest. Each disastrous experiment teaches them new prudence, each well-sustained trial new courage. They have not looked for immediate perfection, and, therefore, are willing yet to learn. They are the men who hold the country together, and their influence is the salt which saves the mass from utter corruption. I look upward above the dust which is raised by scuffling partisans, to the throne of our fathers' God; I look backward on all the threatening events through

which he has brought us; and I can commit my country to the care of Him who "maketh even the wrath of man to praise him," and believe that it is safe. Under providence, I rely with an unshaken faith on the intelligent will of the American people. If my faith be a delusion, may it go with me to my grave. When its warrant proves false, I could pray God, if it be his will, to let me die; for the brightest hope that ever dawned on political freedom shall have been lost in darkness, the fairest column ever reared by the hands of men cast down, and the beacon light of the world gone out.

My hearers, we must soon appear before God to answer for all our conduct here. Then, what will avail all our busy, anxious, most successful pursuit of this world, if, through neglect of a timely faith and repentance, we are lost forever? Let me entreat you, therefore, to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, that the Holy Spirit may be your guide, Christ your intercessor, and the Father receive you among the children of his love. Until we have obtained this grace for ourselves, we shall seek in vain to do any real good;

there is no promise of an answer to our prayers, or of a blessing upon our zeal. We cannot be faithful to others, while we remain unfaithful to God and our own souls. May the voice of Providence, confirming the testimony of the Scriptures, prevail with us all to prepare for eternity, that, in our wise preparation, we may secure our own best happiness, by rendering the best service to God, our country, and our race! Amen.